

PATENT APPLICATION
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**APPLICATION FOR
UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT**

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Be it known that WE, Sean X. Pan, Mark C. Petropoulos, Linnette Perales Rivera, Jeremy B. Pinsly, Zhilei Wang, and Mark S. Thomas, have invented a

SUBSTRATE WITH RAISED SURFACE PORTION

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

When a photoreceptor is dip coated, the layer thickness increases slowly to a target value after the takeup speed reaches a constant value. The resulting non-uniformity in layer thickness is called "sloping." "Sloping" of the deposited layer over the imaging area of the photoreceptor is undesirable since it can degrade the performance of the photoreceptor. To prevent the deposited layer from exhibiting "sloping" in the imaging area, one can use a longer substrate to provide a longer non-imaging area so that the "sloping" of the deposited layer occurs only in the non-imaging area while the deposited layer exhibits relatively uniform thickness in the imaging area. However, a longer substrate and a longer non-imaging area increase costs since more materials have to be used in the substrate and the deposited layer or layers. Thus, there is a need, which the present invention addresses, for new methods to eliminate or reduce the above described problem.

Coating methods and apparatus are described in Petropoulos et al., U.S. Patent 5,633,046; Herbert et al., U.S. Patent 5,683,742; Swain et al., U.S. Patent 6,132,810; Petropoulos et al., U.S. Patent 5,578,410; and Crump et al., U.S. Patent 5,385,759.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is accomplished in embodiments by providing an apparatus comprising:

(a) a substrate including a deposition region and an optional uncoated region, wherein the deposition region includes a level intermediate region disposed between a first end region and a second end region,

wherein the first end region includes a first raised surface portion extending above the level intermediate region and extending circumferentially around the first end region in a continuous manner; and

(b) a dip coated layer over the entire deposition region.

There is also provided in embodiments an apparatus comprising:

1 (a) a substrate defining a longitudinal axis and including a deposition region
2 and an optional uncoated region, wherein the deposition region includes a level
3 intermediate region disposed between a first end region and a second end region,

4 wherein the first end region includes a plurality of raised surface portions, each
5 of the raised surface portions extending above the level intermediate region and
6 extending only partially around the first end region, wherein the plurality of the raised
7 surface portions, when viewed at a substrate end view, collectively extend
8 circumferentially around the first end region in a continuous manner; and

9 (b) a dip coated layer over the entire deposition region.

10 There is provided in further embodiments a coating method comprising:

11 (a) providing a substrate including a deposition region and an optional uncoated
12 region, wherein the deposition region includes a level intermediate region disposed
13 between a first end region and a second end region,

14 wherein the first end region includes a first raised surface portion extending
15 above the level intermediate region and extending circumferentially around the first end
16 region in a continuous manner; and

17 (b) dip coating a layer of a coating solution over the entire deposition region.

18 **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

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20
21 FIG. 1 is an elevational view of a first embodiment of the present coated
22 substrate;

23 FIG. 2 is an elevational view of a second embodiment of the substrate useful in
24 the present invention;

25 FIG. 3 is an elevational view of a third embodiment of the substrate useful in the
26 present invention;

27 FIG. 4 is an elevational view of a fourth embodiment of the substrate useful in
28 the present invention;

29 FIG. 5 is an elevational view of a fifth embodiment of the substrate useful in the
30 present invention; and

31 FIG. 6 is an end view of the substrate depicted in FIG. 5.

32 Unless otherwise noted, the same reference numeral in different Figures refers to
33 the same or similar feature.

34 **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

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2 As used herein, the phrase "coating solution" encompasses any fluid composition
3 including the liquid medium and the coating material regardless of the extent that the
4 coating material may be dissolved in the liquid medium.

5 As seen in the Figures, the substrate (2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E), having a
6 longitudinal axis X, defines on its outer surface a deposition region (6A, 6B, 6C, 6D,
7 6E) and an optional uncoated region (8A, 8B, 8C, 8D), wherein the deposition region
8 includes an intermediate region (10A, 10B, 10C, 10D, 10E) disposed between a first
9 end region (12A, 12B, 12C, 12D, 12E) and a second end region (14A, 14B, 14C, 14D,
10 14E). In embodiments where the substrate is part of an electrostatographic imaging
11 member (e.g., a photoreceptor), one or more of the first end region, the second end
12 region, and the optionally uncoated region may correspond to a non-imaging area of the
13 imaging member, whereas the imaging area of the imaging member includes at least
14 the intermediate region and optionally one or both of the first end region and the second
15 end region. In embodiments, the first end region, the second end region, and the
16 optional uncoated region correspond to the non-imaging area of the imaging member,
17 and the intermediate region corresponds to the imaging area. In FIG. 1, a dip coated
18 layer 16 is formed over the entire deposition region.

19 In FIG. 1, the first end region 12A includes a first raised surface portion 18A
20 which is depicted as a single band having a rectangular shape when viewed in cross
21 section along the longitudinal axis that extends circumferentially around the first end
22 region in a continuous manner. The second end region 14A optionally includes a
23 second raised surface portion 20A similar or dissimilar to the first raised surface
24 portion. In FIG. 1, the second raised surface portion 20A is depicted as a single band
25 having a rectangular shape when viewed in cross section along the longitudinal axis
26 that extends circumferentially around the second end region in a continuous manner.

27 In FIG. 2, the first raised surface portion 18B is depicted as a single band having
28 an elongated rectangular shape when viewed in cross section along the longitudinal
29 axis that extends circumferentially around the first end region 12B and the uncoated
30 region 8B in a continuous manner. In FIG. 2, the second raised surface portion 20B is
31 depicted as a single band having a rectangular shape when viewed in cross section
32 along the longitudinal axis that extends circumferentially around the second end region
33 in a continuous manner.

34 In FIG. 3, the first raised surface portion 18C and the second raised surface
35 portion 20C are depicted as single bands (having a triangular shape when viewed in

cross section along the longitudinal axis) extending circumferentially around the respective first end region and the second end region in a continuous manner.

In FIG. 4, the first end region 12D includes a plurality of raised surface portions (18D, 19D), each raised surface portion extending circumferentially around the first end region in a continuous manner. Each raised surface portion (18D, 19D) is depicted as having a triangular shape when viewed in cross section along the longitudinal axis. The plurality of raised surface portions in the first end region may range in number for example from 2 to 5. The plurality of raised surface portions may be arranged in any suitable manner with respect to one another such as regular or irregular spacing and parallel or non-parallel arrangement. Moreover, each of the plurality of raised surface portions may be the same or different from one another in shape, surface height, size, and the like. The optional second raised surface portion 20D is depicted as a single band (having a triangular shape when viewed in cross section along the longitudinal axis) extending circumferentially around the second end region in a continuous manner. In FIG. 4, the portions of the first end region 12D and the second end region 14D not occupied by the raised surface portions (18D, 19D, 20D) are depicted as tapered surfaces.

FIGS. 5-6 depict on the first end region 12E a plurality of raised surface portions (18E, 19E), each raised surface portion extending only partially around the first end region, wherein the plurality of the raised surface portions (18E, 19E), when viewed at a substrate end view, collectively extend circumferentially around the first end region in a continuous manner (also referred herein as "partial raised surface portions"). The plurality of partial raised surface portions may range in number from 2 to 5. The partial raised surface portions may be spaced at regular or irregular intervals (along the longitudinal axis) at a spacing ranging from 0 to about 1 cm, and particularly from about 1 mm to about 5 mm. In FIGS. 5-6, there are absent an uncoated region and any raised surface portion on the second end region.

In embodiments of the present invention, each raised surface portion extends above the level intermediate region by a value ranging for example from about 0.5 to about 1,000 micrometers, and particularly from about 4 to about 100 micrometers. Each raised surface portion may have a width (i.e., along the longitudinal axis) ranging for example from about 0.5 micrometer to about 100 mm, and particularly from about 10 micrometers to about 10 mm. Moreover, when viewed in cross section along the longitudinal axis, each raised surface portion may have any suitable shape such as a triangular (e.g., isosceles, equilateral, right, and obtuse), a square, a rectangular, a half

1 circle, and the like. The top surface of each raised surface portion when viewed in
2 cross section along the longitudinal axis may be a straight line parallel to the
3 longitudinal axis, a tapered line, a curved line, a peak, a series of steps, and the like.
4 The raised surface portion or portions may occupy a part of or all of the first end
5 region. The raised surface portion or portions may occupy a part of or all of the second
6 end region. Different types of raised surface portions may be used. By extending the
7 raised surfaced portion or portions circumferentially around one or both end regions in
8 a continuous manner, the likelihood is eliminated or minimized that the coating
9 solution will bypass the raised surface portion or portions.

10 The raised surface portions may be formed by any suitable method including for
11 instance by machining the substrate with a diamond tipped tool.

12 The term "level" indicates that the particular surface at issue (e.g., intermediate
13 region) is parallel to the longitudinal axis.

14 In embodiments, the dip coated layer exhibits a substantially uniform thickness
15 over the entire deposition region, particularly over the intermediate region. The phrase
16 "substantially uniform thickness" indicates that the dry coating thickness over the
17 deposition region varies by no more than about 10%, particularly no more than about
18 5%, based on the largest thickness value of the dip coated layer.

19 The present method is believed to be based on the phenomenon of "capillary
20 retention." When liquid is placed on a horizontal surface that is rough with a raised
21 area and a depressed area, liquid will distribute more in the depressed areas per unit
22 area due to surface tension of liquid and gravity. When such rough surface with liquid
23 is positioned vertically, the liquid will flow downward. The contact angle based on the
24 smooth surface is higher in the raised area than in the depressed area. Capillary force
25 will exert driving force for the liquid to flow from the raised area to the depressed area.
26 As a result, there is a higher percentage of liquid in the raised area flowing out. The
27 most solution is retained in the depressed area, especially in the lower positions due to
28 gravity. After the raised area is dip coated, the capillary force and gravity drag and
29 deposit more of the coating solution in the surface area following the raised area. In the
30 present invention, the raised surface portion functions as the raised area. Due to the
31 presence of the raised surface portion, more of the coating solution is deposited in the
32 dip coated layer over the intermediate region than would have occurred in the absence
33 of the raised surface portion. Consequently, greater deposition of the coating solution
34 over the intermediate region increases the coating thickness uniformity of the dip
35 coated layer over the intermediate region. For photoreceptors, greater coating thickness

1 uniformity of the dip coated layer in the imaging area improves performance as
2 compared with a photoreceptor exhibiting pronounced sloping of the dip coated layer in
3 the imaging area.

4 The phrase "dip coating" encompasses the following techniques to deposit
5 layered material onto a substrate: moving the substrate into and out of the coating
6 solution; raising and lowering the coating vessel to contact the coating solution with
7 the substrate; positioning the substrate in a vessel containing the coating solution and
8 then draining the coating solution from the vessel.

9 The substrate may be moved into and out of the solution at any suitable speed
10 including the takeup speed indicated in Yashiki et al., U.S. Patent 4,610,942, the
11 disclosure of which is hereby totally incorporated by reference. The dipping speed to
12 contact the substrate with the coating solution may range for example from about 50
13 to about 3,000 mm/min and may be a constant or changing value. The takeup speed
14 to withdraw the substrate from the coating solution may range for example from about
15 50 to about 500 mm/min and may be a constant or changing value. Any suitable
16 dipping speed and takeup speed, including those discussed herein, can be used to
17 deposit the desired layer or layers.

18 For the deposited layer or layers, each layer has a thickness ranging for example
19 from about 0.05 to about 75 micrometers, and particularly from about 3 to about 40
20 micrometers. Unless otherwise indicated, the disclosed thickness value for each layer
21 is a dry thickness value.

22 The substrate can be formulated entirely of an electrically conductive material,
23 or it can be an insulating material having an electrically conductive surface. The
24 substrate can be opaque or substantially transparent and can comprise numerous
25 suitable materials having the desired mechanical properties. The entire substrate can
26 comprise the same material as that in the electrically conductive surface or the
27 electrically conductive surface can merely be a coating on the substrate. Any suitable
28 electrically conductive material can be employed. Typical electrically conductive
29 materials include metals like copper, brass, nickel, zinc, chromium, stainless steel;
30 and conductive plastics and rubbers, aluminum, semitransparent aluminum, steel,
31 cadmium, titanium, silver, gold, paper rendered conductive by the inclusion of a
32 suitable material therein or through conditioning in a humid atmosphere to ensure the
33 presence of sufficient water content to render the material conductive, indium, tin,
34 metal oxides, including tin oxide and indium tin oxide, and the like. The substrate
35 can vary in thickness over substantially wide ranges depending on its desired use.

1 Generally, the conductive layer ranges in thickness from about 50 Angstroms to about
2 30 micrometers, although the thickness can be outside of this range. When a flexible
3 electrophotographic imaging member is desired, the substrate thickness typically is
4 from about 0.015 mm to about 0.15 mm. When a rigid, hollow imaging member is
5 desired, the substrate thickness is typically from about 0.5 mm to about 5 mm. The
6 substrate can be fabricated from any other conventional material, including organic
7 and inorganic materials. Typical substrate materials include insulating non-
8 conducting materials such as various resins known for this purpose including
9 polycarbonates, polyamides, polyurethanes, paper, glass, plastic, polyesters such as
10 MYLAR[®] (available from DuPont) or MELINEX[®] 447 (available from ICI
11 Americas, Inc.), and the like. If desired, a conductive substrate can be coated onto an
12 insulating material. In addition, the substrate can comprise a metallized plastic, such
13 as titanized or aluminized MYLAR[®]. The substrate can be flexible or rigid, and can
14 have any number of configurations such as a cylindrical drum, an endless flexible
15 belt, and the like.

16 The substrate and coating solution are described herein as being used in the
17 fabrication of a photoreceptor. However, the present invention is not limited to the
18 fabrication of a photoreceptor. In embodiments, the present invention uses other
19 substrates and coating solutions not specifically described herein which are useful for
20 other applications.

21 Any suitable coating solution can be used to form the layer or layers deposited
22 over the substrate. In embodiments, the coating solution may comprise materials
23 typically used for any layer of a photoreceptor including such layers as a charge
24 barrier layer, an adhesive layer, a charge transport layer, and a charge generating
25 layer, such materials and amounts thereof being illustrated for instance in U.S. Patent
26 4,265,990, U.S. Patent 4,390,611, U.S. Patent 4,551,404, U.S. Patent 4,588,667, U.S.
27 Patent 4,596,754, and U.S. Patent 4,797,337, the disclosures of which are totally
28 incorporated by reference.

29 In embodiments, a coating solution may include the materials for a charge
30 barrier layer including for example polymers such as polyvinylbutyral, epoxy resins,
31 polyesters, polysiloxanes, polyamides, or polyurethanes. Materials for the charge
32 barrier layer are disclosed in U.S. Patents 5,244,762 and 4,988,597, the disclosures of
33 which are totally incorporated by reference.

34 The optional adhesive layer preferably has a dry thickness between about 0.001
35 micrometer to about 0.2 micrometer. A typical adhesive layer includes film-forming

1 polymers such as polyester, du Pont 49,000 resin (available from E. I. du Pont de
2 Nemours & Co.). VITEL-PE100™ (available from Goodyear Rubber & Tire Co.),
3 polyvinylbutyral, polyvinylpyrrolidone, polyurethane, polymethyl methacrylate, and
4 the like. In embodiments, the same material can function as an adhesive layer and as
5 a charge blocking layer.

6 In embodiments, a charge generating solution may be formed by dispersing a
7 charge generating material selected from azo pigments such as Sudan Red, Dian Blue,
8 Janus Green B, and the like; quinone pigments such as Algol Yellow, Pyrene
9 Quinone, Indanthrene Brilliant Violet RRP, and the like; quinocyanine pigments;
10 perylene pigments; indigo pigments such as indigo, thioindigo, and the like;
11 bisbenzoimidazole pigments such as Indofast Orange toner, and the like;
12 phthalocyanine pigments such as copper phthalocyanine, aluminochloro-
13 phthalocyanine, and the like; quinacridone pigments; or azulene compounds in a
14 binder resin such as polyester, polystyrene, polyvinyl butyral, polyvinyl pyrrolidone,
15 methyl cellulose, polyacrylates, cellulose esters, and the like. A representative charge
16 generating solution comprises: 2% by weight hydroxy gallium phthalocyanine; 1%
17 by weight terpolymer of vinyl acetate, vinyl chloride, and maleic acid; and 97% by
18 weight cyclohexanone.

19 In embodiments, a charge transport solution may be formed by dissolving a
20 charge transport material selected from compounds having in the main chain or the
21 side chain a polycyclic aromatic ring such as anthracene, pyrene, phenanthrene,
22 coronene, and the like, or a nitrogen-containing hetero ring such as indole, carbazole,
23 oxazole, isoxazole, thiazole, imidazole, pyrazole, oxadiazole, pyrazoline, thiadiazole,
24 triazole, and the like, and hydrazone compounds in a resin having a film-forming
25 property. Such resins may include polycarbonate, polymethacrylates, polyarylate,
26 polystyrene, polyester, polysulfone, styrene-acrylonitrile copolymer, styrene-methyl
27 methacrylate copolymer, and the like. An illustrative charge transport solution has the
28 following composition: 10% by weight N,N'-diphenyl-N,N'-bis(3-methylphenyl)-
29 (1,1'-biphenyl)-4,4'diamine; 14% by weight poly(4,4'-diphenyl-1,1'-cyclohexane
30 carbonate) (400 molecular weight); 57% by weight tetrahydrofuran; and 19% by
31 weight monochlorobenzene.

32 A coating solution may also contain a liquid medium, preferably an organic
33 liquid medium, such as one or more of the following: tetrahydrofuran,
34 monochlorobenzene, and cyclohexanone.

1 After all the desired layers are coated onto the substrate, the coated layers may
2 be subjected to elevated drying temperatures such as from about 100 to about 160°C
3 for about 0.2 to about 2 hours.

4 Other modifications of the present invention may occur to those skilled in the
5 art based upon a reading of the present disclosure and these modifications are
6 intended to be included within the scope of the present invention.